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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

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WHEN I intimated in my laſt paper ſome diſtruſt of Mr. Johnſon's complaiſance to the fairer part of his readers, it was becauſe I had a greater opinion of his impartiality and ſeverity as a judge, than of his gallantry as a fine gentleman. And indeed I am well aware of the difficulties he would have to encounter, if he attempted to reconcile the polite, with the gramatical part of our language. Should he, by an act of power, baniſh and attaint many of the favourite words and expreſſions with which the ladies have ſo profuſely enriched our language, he would excite the indignation of the moſt formidable, becauſe the moſt lovely part of his readers: his dictionary would be condemned as a ſyſtem of tyranny, and he himſelf, like the laſt Tarquin, run the riſque of being depoſed. So popular and ſo powerful is the female cauſe! On the other hand, ſhould

ſhould he, by an act of grace, admit, legitimate and incorporate into our language thoſe words and expreſſions, which, haſtily begot, owe their birth to the incontinency of female eloquence; what ſevere cenſures might he not juſtly apprehend from the learned part of his readers, who do not underſtand complaiſances of that nature?

For my own part, as I am always enclined to plead the cauſe of my fair fellow-ſubjects, I ſhall now take the liberty of laying before Mr. Johnſon thoſe arguments which upon this occaſion may be urged in their favour, as introductory to the compromiſe which I ſhall humbly offer and conclude with.

Language is indiſputably the more immediate province of the fair ſex: there they ſhine, there they excell. The torrents of their eloquence, eſpecially in the vituperative way, ſtun all oppoſition, and bear away in one promiſcuous heap, nouns, pronouns, verbs, moods and tenſes. If words are wanting (which indeed happens but ſeldom) indignation inſtantly makes new ones; and I have often known four or five ſyllables that never met one another before, haſtily and fortuitouſly jumbled into ſome word of mighty import.

Nor is the tender part of our language leſs obliged to that ſoft and amiable ſex; their love being at leaſt as productive as their indignation. Should they lament in an involuntary retirement the abſence of the adored object, they give new murmurs to the brook, new ſounds to the echo, and new notes to the plaintive Philomela. But when this happy copiouſneſs flows, as it often does, into gentle numbers, good Gods! how is the poetical diction enriched, and the poetical licence extended! Even in common converſation, I never ſee a pretty mouth opening to ſpeak, but I expect, and am ſeldom diſappointed, ſome new improvement of our language. I remember

remember many very expreſſive words coined in that fair mint. I aſſiſted at the birth of that moſt ſignificant word, FLIRTATION, which dropped from the moſt beautiful mouth in the world, and which has ſince received the ſanction of our moſt accurate Laureat in one of his comedies. Some inattentive and undiſcerning people have, I know, taken it to be a term ſynonimous with coquetry; but I lay hold of this opportunity to undeceive them, and eventually to inform Mr. Johnſon, that FLIRTATION is ſhort of coquetry, and intimates only the firſt hints of aproximation, which ſubſequent coquetry may reduce to thoſe preliminary articles, that commonly end in a definitive treaty.

I WAS alſo a witneſs to the riſe and progreſs of that moſt important verb, TO FUZZ; which if not of legitimate birth, is at leaſt of fair extraction. As I am not ſure that it has yet made it's way into Mr. Johnſon's literary retirement, I think myſelf obliged to inform him that it is at preſent the moſt uſeful, and the moſt uſed word in our language; ſince it means no leſs than dealing twice together with the ſame pack of cards, for luck's ſake, at WHIST.

NOT content with enriching our language by words abſolutely new, my fair countrywomen have gone ſtill farther, and improved it by the application and extenſion of old ones to various and very different ſignifications. They take a word and change it, like a guinea into ſhillings for pocket money, to be employed in the ſeveral occaſional purpoſes of the day. For inſtance, the adjective VAST and it's adverb VASTLY mean any thing, and are the faſhionable words of the moſt faſhionable people. A fine woman (under this head I comprehend all fine gentlemen too, not knowing in truth where elſe to place them properly) is VASTLY obliged, or VASTLY offend-

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ed, VASTLY glad, or VASTLY ſorry. Large objects are VASTLY great, ſmall ones are VASTLY little; and I had lately the pleaſure to hear a fine woman pronounce, by a happy metonymy, a very ſmall gold ſnuff-box that was produced in company, to be VASTLY pretty, becauſe it was ſo VASTLY little. Mr. Johnſon will do well to conſider ſeriouſly, to what degree he will reſtrain the various and extenſive ſignifications of this great word.

ANOTHER very material point ſtill remains to be conſidered; I mean the orthography of our language, which is at preſent very various and unſettled.

WE have at preſent two very different orthographies, the PEDANTIC, and the POLITE; the one founded upon certain dry and crabbed rules of etymology and grammar, the other ſingly upon the juſtneſs and delicacy of the ear. I am thoroughly perſuaded that Mr. Johnſon will endeavour to eſtabliſh the former; and I perfectly agree with him, provided it can be quietly brought about. Spelling, as well as muſic, is better performed by book, than merely by the ear, which may be variouſly affected by the ſame ſounds. I therefore moſt earneſtly recommend to my fair countrywomen, and to their faithful, or faithleſs ſervants, the fine gentlemen of this realm, to ſurrender, as well for their own private, as for the public utility, all their natural rights and privileges of miſ-ſpelling, which they have ſo long enjoyed, and ſo vigorouſly exerted. I have really known very fatal conſequences attend that looſe and uncertain practice of AURICULAR ORTHOGRAPHY; of which I ſhall produce two inſtances as a ſufficient warning.

A VERY fine gentleman wrote a very harmleſs and innocent letter to a very fine lady, giving her an account of ſome trifling commiſſions which he had executed according

cording to her orders. This letter, though directed to the lady, was, by the miſtake of a ſervant, delivered to, and opened by her huſband; who finding all his attempts to underſtand it unſucceſsful, took it for granted that it was a concerted cypher, under which a criminal correſpondence, not much to his own honour or advantage, was ſecretly carried on. With the letter in his hand, and rage in his heart, he went immediately to his wife, and reproached her in the moſt injurious terms with her ſuppoſed infidelity. The lady, conſcious of her own innocence, calmly enough requeſted to ſee the grounds of ſo unjuſt an accuſation; and being accuſtomed to the AURICULAR ORTHOGRAPHY, made ſhift to read to her incenſed huſband the moſt innoffenſive letter that ever was written. The huſband was undeceived, or at leaſt wiſe enough to ſeem ſo; for in ſuch nice caſes one muſt not peremptorily decide. However, as ſudden impreſſions are generally pretty ſtrong, he has been obſerved to be more ſuſpicious ever ſince.

THE other accident had much worſe conſequences. Matters were happily brought, between a fine gentleman and a fine lady, to the deciſive period of an appointment at a third place. *The place where* is always the lover's buſineſs, *the time when* the lady's. Accordingly an impatient and rapturous letter from the lover ſignified to the lady the houſe and ſtreet *where*; to which a tender anſwer from the lady aſſented, and appointed the time *when*. But unfortunately, from the uncertainty of the lover's AURICULAR ORTHOGRAPHY, the lady miſtook both houſe and ſtreet, was conveyed in a hackney chair to a wrong one, and in the hurry and agitation which ladies are ſometimes in upon thoſe occaſions, ruſhed into a houſe where ſhe happened to be known, and her intentions conſequently diſcovered. In the mean time the